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MAJOR GENERAL TALLIES 10 POINTS ON ‘ROAD TO DERBY’ WITH IROQUOIS WIN; PASSES TWO-TURN TEST TO LAND BREEDERS’ CUP JUVENILE BERTH

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, Sept. 18, 2021) – WinStar Farm and Siena Farms’ **Major General** is the early points leader on the 2022 “Road to the Kentucky Derby Presented by Woodford Reserve” after the promising colt invaded from New York to win Saturday night’s 40th running of the \$300,000 Iroquois (Grade III) for 2-year-olds by a neck over **Tough to Tame** in front of a crowd of 20,204 at Churchill Downs.

Sent to post as the 9-2 second betting choice following a 6 ½-furlong maiden win on Saratoga, the **Todd Pletcher**-trained **Major General** covered 1 1/16 miles on a fast track in 1:44.88 under jockey **Javier Castellano** to bank \$177,525 and 10 points on the “Road to the Kentucky Derby” point system that will determine the field for next year’s 148th running of the Kentucky Derby Presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) on May 7, 2022 at Churchill Downs. The Iroquois was the first in a series of 37 select races on the “Road to the Kentucky Derby,” which is now entering its 10th year.

The Iroquois also is part of the Breeders’ Cup “Win and You’re In Juvenile Division” Challenge and the win by **Major General** earned the Kentucky-bred son of Constitution a guaranteed spot in the starting gate for the \$2 million Breeders’ Cup Juvenile (GI) at Del Mar on “Future Stars Friday,” Nov. 5. **Major General**’s entry fees will be paid by Breeders’ Cup Ltd. and his connections will receive a travel stipend.

Roger McQueen and **Magnolia Midnight** battled head and head for the lead through the first 5 ½ furlongs while setting fractions of :23.82, :47.89 and 1:12.83. **Major General**, who stumbled at the break from post No. 8 in the field of 11, raced sixth in the clear down the backstretch.

Major General and even-money favorite **Stellar Tap** poked their heads in front leaving the final turn. **Major General** put away the favorite at the final furlong marker and had enough left to hold off a late-running 37-1 longshot **Tough to Tame**, 29-1 **Red Knobs** and 10-1 **Bourbon Heist**.

“You’re always confident whenever Todd puts you on a horse,” Castellano said. “His team does a great job and this horse is just learning. He seemed to enjoy going two turns and when the other horses got to him in the stretch he started to re-break.”

Major General survived a Jockey’s Claim of Foul by **Ricardo Santana Jr.**, who finished fifth aboard **Stellar Tap**. The claim for an alleged incident at the top of the stretch was dismissed by the **Kentucky Horse Racing Commission** stewards.

“I was a little surprised Ricardo claimed foul,” Castellano said. “Going past the three-sixteenths (of a mile) pole his horse’s head sort of came into mine when he was switching leads and I don’t think it affected the outcome of the race. After that, my horse was looking around a little bit when he got to the lead. This was his first time under the lights and with a crowd like this.”

Major General paid \$11.80, \$6.60 and \$4.80. **Tough to Tame**, under **Sophie Doyle**, returned \$23.40 and \$11.60. **Red Knobs**, three-quarters of a length back of the runner-up with **James Graham** up, paid \$9.

Bourbon Heist, under **Joe Talamo**, was another half-length back in fourth. **Stellar Tap**, **Guntown**, **Strike Hard**, **Husband Material**, **Roger McQueen** and **Magnolia Midnight** completed the order of finish.

Major General, perfect in two starts, has earnings that total \$232,525.

A \$420,000 yearling purchase at the 2020 Keeneland September Sale, **Major General** was bred in Kentucky by **Circular Road Breeders**. The Constitution colt is out of the Uncle Mo mare No Mo Lemons.

IROQUOIS QUOTES

Javier Castellano, jockey of MAJOR GENERAL (winner): “You’re always confident whenever Todd puts you on a horse. His team does a great job and this horse is just learning. He seemed to enjoy going two turns and when the other horses got to him in the stretch he started to re-break. I was a little surprised Ricardo (Santana Jr.) claimed foul (on **Major General**). Going past the three-sixteenths (of a mile) pole his horse’s head sort of came into mine when he was switching leads and I don’t think it affected the outcome of the race. After that, my horse was looking around a little bit when he got to the lead. This was his first time under the lights and with a crowd like this.”

Chris Davis, trainer of TOUGH TO TAME (winner): “He ran a great race closing late on the outside. I thought being on the rail hurt him in the early portion of the race. I’d love to see him draw to the outside next time and see what happens. We’re very proud of how he ran tonight.”

STAKES RECORD FOR HIDDEN CONNECTION IN GRADE III POCAHONTAS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, Sept. 18, 2021) – Hidden Brook Farm’s Hidden Connection reaffirmed that her flashy 7 ½-length debut win at Colonial Downs wasn’t a fluke as she rolled to a 9 ½ length victory over **Mama Rina** in Saturday night’s 53rd running of the \$300,000 Pocahontas (Grade III) for 2-year-old fillies at Churchill Downs.

Trained by **Bret Calhoun**, Hidden Connection ran 1 1/16 miles in a stakes record 1:43.78 to give jockey **Reylu Gutierrez** his first career Churchill Downs win.

Hidden Connection, a Kentucky-bred daughter of Connect out of the Awesome Again mare C J’s Gal, banked \$177,525 for the win and guaranteed herself a starting spot in the \$2 million Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Fillies (GI) on Nov. 5 at Del Mar. The Pocahontas is part of the Breeders’ Cup “Win and You’re In” Juvenile Fillies Challenge Division, which means the winner will also will have her entry fees and a travel allowance paid by Breeders’ Cup.

Hidden Connection also is the early points-leader on the Road to the Kentucky Oaks after collecting 10 points. The Pocahontas was the first of 30 qualifying races to the Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) to be run next May, and points were awarded to the Top 4 finishers on a 10-4-2-1 scale.

Breaking from post No. 9 in the field of 10 two-year-old Hidden Connection sat just off the right hip of leader **Lemieux**, who set fractions of :24.26, :48.62 and 1:13.27. With three furlongs to run, Hidden Connection dragged herself to the lead, which rapidly widened from the final three-sixteenths of a mile to the wire.

“It is incredibly special to get my first win at Churchill Downs for these great people, in front of this amazing crowd and aboard this filly,” Gutierrez said. “She’s is unbelievable. Yesterday, **Florent Geroux** was talking to me in the jocks room about how to ride this track. He said sometimes in the turns you want to wait a little longer than usual. So, I waited as long as I could in the turn and she just drew away. That was unbelievable. She was the first horse I worked this meet at Churchill Downs. Now, I’ll be right back at that barn tomorrow morning at 5:30 for more workers.”

Hidden Connection (2-2-0-0—\$207,525) paid \$5.60, \$4 and \$3.20 as the 9-5 favorite. Mama Rina, who rallied to get second by a neck under **Brian Hernandez Jr.**, returned \$21.40 and \$7.80 at odds of 30-1. **Goddess of Fire**, with **Javier Castellano** up, paid \$4.20 to show.

Code for Success was another length back in fourth. The order of finish was completed by **Majestic d’Oro**, **Ontheonesandtwos**, **Miss Chamita**, **Kneeships**, **Maxine Machine** and **Lemieux**. **Joyrunner** was scratched in the paddock.

The winner was bred by **St. Simon Place**.

Hidden Connection is among the first-crop of 2-year-olds from her sire Connect. She was purchased at the 2021 OBS June Horses of Racing Age Sale for \$85,000.

“She was working at Keeneland this spring before we went to Colonial,” Calhoun said. “When she was working there I thought she could be special. Then we went to Colonial and she won so impressively on debut. She didn’t have as much experience as some of the horses in this race but she backed up that win very well. If she comes out of things OK you’d have to think she’s on to the Breeders’ Cup.”

POCAHONTAS QUOTES

Reylu Gutierrez, jockey of HIDDEN CONNECTION (winner): “It is incredibly special to get my first win at Churchill Downs for these great people, in front of this amazing crowd and aboard this filly. She’s is unbelievable. Yesterday, Florent Geroux was talking to me in the jocks room about how to ride this track. He said sometimes in the turns you want to wait a little longer than usual. So, I waited as long as I could in the turn and she just drew away. That was unbelievable. She was the first horse I worked this meet at Churchill Downs. Now, I’ll be right back at that barn tomorrow morning at 5:30 for more workers.”

Bret Calhoun, trainer of HIDDEN CONNECTION (winner): “She was working at Keeneland this spring before we went to Colonial. When she was working there I thought she could be special. Then we went to Colonial and she won so impressively on debut. She didn’t have as much experience as some of the horses in this race but she backed up that win very well. If she comes out of things OK you’d have to think she’s on to the Breeders’ Cup.”

Brian Hernandez Jr., jockey of MAMA RINA (winner): “She ran a good race. I didn’t think they’d go that slow up front early but she ran a good race.”

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CLASSY OAKS WINNER SHEDARESTHEDEVIL WIRES FIELD IN LOCUST GROVE

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, Sept. 18, 2021) – Qatar Racing, Flurry Racing Stables and Big Aut Farms' 2020 Longines Kentucky Oaks (Grade I) hero **Shedaresthedevil** broke fast from the gate, dictated the pace throughout and determinedly held off Crystal Ball by a neck to win Saturday night's 37th running of the \$400,000 Locust Grove (Grade III) for fillies and mares at Churchill Downs.

Trained by **Brad Cox** and ridden by **Florent Geroux**, Shedaresthedevil, the odds-on favorite in the field of six fillies and mares, clicked off comfortable fractions of :24.32, :48.30 and 1:12.17 en route to a final time of 1:42.86 for the 1 1/16 miles.

"She's a very classy filly," Geroux said. "Tonight we got the lead and she was moving comfortably. This was a good prep race for the Breeders' Cup. She has seven weeks until then and I think she'll get a lot out of this race."

Shedaresthedevil, a 4-year-old Kentucky-bred daughter of Daredevil out of the Congrats mare Starship Warpspeed, returned \$3.20, \$2.40 and \$2.10. Crystal Ball, ridden by **Tyler Gaffalione**, returned \$3.40 and \$2.20 with **Envoutante** another 1 1/2 lengths back in third under **Brian Hernandez Jr.** and paying \$2.10 to show.

Matera, **Our Super Freak** and **High Regard** completed the order of finish.

The victory was worth \$244,140 to Shedaresthedevil and increased her earnings to \$2,291,458 with a record of 9-2-4 from 16 starts. Shedaresthedevil, the 15-1 upset winner of last year's Kentucky Oaks, is perfect in five starts beneath the Twin Spires.

In her previous start, she won last month's \$300,000 Clement L. Hirsch (GI) at Del Mar. Now 4-for-5 this year, her 4-year-old campaign includes a one-length score in the \$500,000 La Troienne (GI).

"Congratulations to all of the partners who are involved in this filly," Cox said. "Florent gave her a really good trip. She's a very classy filly and knows how to fight to get things done. She's proven how well she's done here at Churchill and this was a good spot to get her ready for the Breeders' Cup."

The Locust Grove is named after the 1790 Georgian mansion in Louisville that played home to ancestors of Churchill Downs founder Col. M. Lewis Clark.

LOCUST GROVE QUOTES

Florent Geroux, jockey of SHEDARESTHEDEVIL (winner): "She's a very classy filly. Tonight we got the lead and she was moving comfortably. This was a good prep race for the Breeders' Cup. She has seven weeks until then and I think she'll get a lot out of this race."

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Tyler Gaffalione, jockey of CRYSTAL BALL (runner-up): "The spot wasn't quite there for her to go by around the first turn. We ended up sitting just off the pace. Around the far turn we got room on the inside and she ran a great race but it just wasn't enough. I'm really proud of the effort she showed tonight."

SCONSIN BEATS BELL'S THE ONE IN OPEN MIND THRILLER

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, Sept. 18, 2021) – Lloyd Madison Farms IV's homebred **Sconsin** got the first run on **Bell's the One** down the stretch in Saturday night's 12th running of the \$300,000 Open Mind (Listed) at Churchill Downs as she turned back a late run from the 4-5 favorite to prevail by a half-length in a clash of two of the top filly and mare sprinters in America.

Trained by **Greg Foley** and ridden by **Tyler Gaffalione**, Sconsin ran six furlongs in a stakes record 1:08.75 as the 9-5 second betting choice.

Sconsin, 3 1/4-length winner of the \$150,000 Winning Colors (Grade III) at Churchill Downs in May, was rated in fourth, as expected, behind pacesetter **Mundaye Call** who dictated the terms from the rail through early fractions of :21.64 and :44.77. **Ain't No Elmers** and **Jungle Juice (IRE)** tracked just behind the leader. Bell's the One, who improved her impressive record to nine wins from 19 starts and \$1.1 million earnings after a victory in the \$200,000 Honorable Miss (GII) at Saratoga this summer, trailed the compact field of five fillies and mares.

Sconsin made the first move and had a two-length advantage on Bell's the One leaving the turn. Sconsin drew even with the leading trio with a furlong to run and out-finished Bell's the One to the wire.

"A lot of credit has to go to Greg and his team for getting this filly ready to go tonight," Gaffalione said. "She was very sharp and we got into a good position early. There was some pace in front early. She dug in well late to hold off (Bell's the One). It was a really strong effort tonight."

Sconsin, who banked the \$185,000 first prize, improved her record to five wins, four seconds and a third in 15 starts. Her career earnings total \$783,362.

The career earnings for the 4-year-old Kentucky-bred daughter of Include now total \$783,362.

"Going into the race we saw there was a little bit of speed on paper," Foley said. "She got the pace setup tonight unlike the Ballerina at Saratoga. **Neil (Pessin)**'s filly (Bell's the One) beat us in the spring and we got the better hand tonight. She deserves it. Tyler gave her a great ride. He knew Bell's the One was coming and Sconsin just had her measured tonight. It was our turn."

Sconsin paid \$5.60, \$2.40 and \$2.10. Bell's the One, ridden by **Corey Lanerie**, returned \$2.40 and \$2.10. Mundaye Call finished another four lengths back in third under **Florent Geroux** and paid \$2.40 to show. It was another half-length back to Jungle Juice (IRE) and 6 ¾ lengths back to Ain't No Elmers.

"It was a great race tonight with two solid horses," said Neil Pessin, trainer of Bell's the One. "Bell's ran a great race and we are proud of her effort."

Saturday's race saluted the late **Eugene Klein**'s Hall of Fame filly **Open Mind**, the **D. Wayne Lukas**-trained winner of the 1988 Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies (GI) at Churchill Downs who returned to the Louisville track the following spring to win the Kentucky Oaks. The New Jersey-bred filly was an Eclipse Award champion at ages two and three. A winner of 12 races and \$1,844,372 in 19 starts, the daughter of Deputy Minister was enshrined in Racing's Hall of Fame in 2011.

OPEN MIND QUOTES

Tyler Gaffalione, jockey of SCONSIN (winner): "A lot of credit has to go to Greg and his team for getting this filly ready to go tonight. She was very sharp and we got into a good position early. There was some pace in front early. She dug in well late to hold off (Bell's the One). It was a really strong effort tonight."

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Neil Pessin, trainer of BELL'S THE ONE (runner-up): "It was a great race tonight with two solid horses. Bell's ran a great race and we are proud of her effort."

JUST MIGHT WIRES FIELD IN INAUGURAL LOUISVILLE THOROUGHBRED SOCIETY

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, Sept. 18, 2021) – Griffon Farms and Michelle Lovell's 5-year-old homebred gelding **Just Might** led every step of the way in Saturday night's inaugural \$275,000 Louisville Thoroughbred Society at Churchill Downs to collect his fourth straight stakes win with a three-quarter-length triumph over **Endorsed**. Even-money favorite **Bango** was another 1 ¼ lengths back in third.

Just Might, trained by Lovell and ridden by **Rafael Bejarano**, ran six furlongs in 1:08.71 after dictating the pace in the field of six 3-year-olds and up through fractions of :21.81, :44.75 and :56.53.

"He got into stride quickly and was on the early pace," Bejarano said. "He traveled well and even though we were going fast he was doing it comfortably. In deep stretch there were other horses coming to us but he was very game. He's been in great form this year."

Just Might won for the eighth time in 29 starts and the \$168,105 payday jumped the Kentucky-bred's career earnings to \$688,414.

Just Might, a son of Justin Phillip, spent the summer at Colonial Downs in Virginia where he was victorious in the \$100,000 Da Hoss Stakes on turf and \$100,000 Chesapeake Stakes on dirt. His stakes-win streak began at Churchill Downs came in June when he defeated six rivals in the \$110,000 Mighty Beau at 5 ½ furlongs on turf.

"He's in unbelievable form this year," Lovell said. "Turf or dirt, it doesn't really matter what the surface is. He runs so hard every time. It was great being able to celebrate tonight with 'Pappy' (Griffon). That made this win much more special. Pappy is such a lovely human. He's been like family to me and has been with me for most of my career. This horse is very special to us."

Said Griffon: "He's by far the best horse I've ever owned and bred. I was hoping he would run in 1:09 tonight to try and back up the (1:07.93) last out. He went in 1:08 and change (1:08.71). He's run well on every surface but I think he loves the dirt."

Just Might paid \$8, \$4.40 and \$2.60 as the 3-1 second betting choice. Endorsed, ridden by **Julien Leparoux** at odds of 8-1, returned \$7.80 and \$3.60. Bango, with **Tyler Gaffalione** in the saddle, paid \$2.40 to show.

It was another six lengths back to **Mighty Mischief** in fourth, who was followed by **Dennis' Moment** and **Derby Date**.

The race is named for the Louisville Thoroughbred Society, which opened for regular hours of operation in March 2021. The **Louisville Thoroughbred Society** is Louisville's only on-site wagering by Churchill Downs in the heart of Louisville's metropolitan scene. The premier club for Thoroughbred enthusiasts is open for private membership applications, and reservations for special events are being accepted. For more information, visit www.thelouisvillethoroughbredsociety.com.

LOUISVILLE THOROUGHBRED SOCIETY QUOTES

Rafael Bejarano, jockey of JUST MIGHT (winner): "He got into stride quickly and was on the early pace. He traveled well and even though we were going fast he was doing it comfortably. In deep stretch there were other horses coming to us but he was very game. He's been in great form this year."

Michelle Lovell, co-owner/breeder and trainer of JUSTMIGHT (winner): "He's in unbelievable form this year. Turf or dirt, it doesn't really matter what the surface is. He runs so hard every time. It was great being able to celebrate tonight with 'Pappy' (Griffon). That made this win much more special. Pappy is such a lovely human. He's been like family to me and has been with me for most of my career. This horse is very special to us."

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ABOUT CHURCHILL DOWNS RACETRACK

Churchill Downs Racetrack ("CDRT"), the world's most legendary racetrack, has been the home of The Kentucky Derby, the longest continually held annual sporting event in the United States, since 1875. Located in Louisville, CDRT features a series of themed race days during Derby Week, including the Kentucky Oaks, and conducts Thoroughbred horse racing during three race meets in the Spring, September, and the Fall. CDRT is located on 175 acres and has a one-mile dirt track, a 7/8-mile turf track, a stabling area, and provides seating for approximately 60,000 guests. The saddling paddock and the stable area has barns sufficient to accommodate 1,400 horses and a 114-room dormitory for backstretch personnel. CDRT also has a year-round simulcast wagering facility. www.ChurchillDowns.com.

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